

THE GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE BIRD ALLIANCE // VOL. 108 NO. 4 FALL 2024



PARTNERSHIP IN THE EAST BAY'S PARKS

BY BLAKE EDGAR

In November 1934, in the midst of the Great Depression, voters in seven East Bay cities approved a ballot measure promising jobs through the creation of several ridgeline parks. With land in the Oakland and Berkeley hills luring real estate developers and no agency preserving the watershed, park advocates made the unprecedented proposal for a new government agency to achieve their goal.

CONTINUED on page 3



Glenn Phillips

Middle Lake Restoration Project.

REFLECTING ON RESTORATION

BY GLENN PHILLIPS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On a beautiful, foggy morning in July, a dozen representatives from San Francisco environmental groups gathered in Golden Gate Park with SF Recreation and Parks Commissioner Phil Ginsburg and his key natural resources staff. This meeting, the first since the COVID-19 pandemic began, provided an opportunity for environmentalists to share their concerns and celebrate recent successes with the Parks Department. Among the successes was the significant increase in native plant stock grown in the

department's nursery, rising from less than 10% in 2020 to over 40% in 2024.

The highlight of the meeting was a tour of the newly opened Middle Lake Rehabilitation Project. Located at the center of the Chain of Lakes area on the west side of Golden Gate Park, Middle Lake was originally dug out of the sand dunes in 1898. Over time, it steadily declined, and by the late 1980s, it had become little more than a damp meadow, overrun with invasive species.

The rehabilitation project, which began in 2018, involved a complete rebuilding of the lake. The work included; adding a shallow shelf around the lake's perimeter to create potential habitat for threatened California Red-legged frogs, removing invasive species (including a significant number of eucalyptus trees), and planting over 100,000 native plants. Unlike previous restoration efforts in Golden Gate Park, this project's construction contract includes long-term maintenance to ensure the newly planted native species fully establish themselves.

As Commissioner Ginsburg rightfully pointed out "Middle Lake is an extremely important habitat for a variety of birds, including ducks, cormorants, geese, red-tailed and red-shouldered hawks, and great blue herons...". We couldn't agree more.

With almost 80 bird species observed at Middle Lake in the past month, and from GGBA's own ongoing habitat restoration efforts at nearby North Lake, we know just how critical these projects are to ensure the future of birds in the Bay Area.

Thanks to strong allies like Commissioner Ginsburg, Bay Area environmentalists and advocates, and the funding support of Park Bonds, the General Fund, and the Open Space Fund, we can continue to provide good wildlife habitat and accessible green spaces.

If you'd like to explore this corner of Golden Gate Park, you can join the Golden Gate Bird Alliance for a field trip to Middle Lake through our new bird curious trips, or participate in a habitat restoration project at nearby North Lake.

NEWS BRIEFS

Point Molate

In July, the City of Richmond, Guidiville Rancheria of California (Pomo), and East Bay Regional Parks District agreed to turn the 80-acre Point Molate tract on the Point San Pablo Peninsula into a regional park. Thank you to everyone who helped push for this outcome!

New Private Birding Tours

If you've ever wanted your own personal birding guide in the Bay Area, now you can hire one through our new Private Birding Tours program. Whether it's a solo trip for yourself or you have a group of friends, we have options for all your birding needs.

Elected Board Members

At our Annual Members Meeting in August, our members officially voted in John Callaway, Susan MacWhorter, Kenneth Hillan, Laurie Sample, and Mary Wand to serve on the Golden Gate Bird Alliance Board of Directors. All but one are serving their first term with GGBA.

Volunteer Appreciation Picnic

On Sunday, October 6 from 10am-1pm we'll be celebrating the incredible work of all our volunteers with guided birding and lunch on us at Wildcat Canyon (Elderberry picnic Area). If you're a volunteer with GGBA visit the volunteer page of our website to register.

PARTNERSHIP from page 1

After California Governor James Rolph signed the nation's first law to establish a regional park district in August 1933, 14,000 Bay Area residents signed petitions to place a park measure on the ballot the following year. The measure passed with 71% in favor of establishing the new district. Two years later, the first three East Bay Regional parks were established: Upper Wildcat Canyon (later named Tilden), Lake Temescal, and Round Top (now Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve).

Celebrating its 90th anniversary this year, the East Bay Regional Park District now comprises nearly 127,000 acres in Alameda and Contra Costa counties and 73 individual parks—making it the nation's largest regional park system.

Imagine life here without Briones, Coyote Hills, Sunol, and Reinhardt Redwood. Many East Bay Regional Parks are fixtures of Golden Gate Bird Alliance's classes and field trips. Some have been sites of conservation victories, and two (Arrowhead Marsh and Meeker Slough) still benefit from our habitat restoration program. For decades, the Alliance has been an avid partner—and occasional provoker—to the Park District's ambitions to acquire land.

In 2017 during the opening reception of GGBA's centennial exhibition, the Park District's General Manager at the time, Robert Doyle, said, "I don't know of any other partner (GGBA) that has done more to get kids to the shoreline, to learn about birds and the plants you restored to nourish the birds."

The 55 miles of shoreline managed by the Park District do indeed provide rich habitat for birds and have been particularly prominent locations for GGBA action.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline, Oakland

Decades of advocacy to protect tidal marsh in San Leandro Bay culminated in 1971, when GGBA secured Arrowhead Marsh as a refuge for the endangered Ridgway's Rail. Four years later, the Port of Oakland transferred Arrowhead and surrounding marshland to the Park District. In 1986, GGBA and others sued the Port to stop the filling of adjacent wetlands—leading to the



Janet Carpinelli

Maureen Lahiff giving a bird talk to group in front of Arrowhead Marsh.

The East Bay Regional Park District now comprises nearly 127,000 acres in Alameda and Contra Costa counties and 73 individual parks—making it the nation's largest regional park system.

restoration of 73 acres now known as the New Marsh.

Each month, GGBA volunteers plant native vegetation, remove weeds, and clear trash at Arrowhead Marsh. In 1999, what began as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Wetlands Project evolved into GGBA's award-winning Eco-Education Program with Title I Bay Area schools.

Robert W. Crown Memorial State Beach, Alameda

Low tide at Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary draws a diverse, abundant array of shorebirds to the exposed mudflat at this six-acre marsh. In 1979, the Park District dedicated the marsh to Elsie Roemer, the environmentalist who battled against wetland development in Alameda and Arrowhead Marsh and documented Alameda's nesting colony of California Least Terns. GGBA's annual conservation award also bears Roemer's name.

West of the sanctuary on Crown Beach, GGBA members have monitored another endangered species, Snowy Plover. In 2013,

GGBA persuaded the Park District to install signs alerting beachgoers to the plovers' seasonal presence in order to reduce disturbance of their roost.

Point Pinole Regional Shoreline, Richmond

The Giant Powder Company, the first American company licensed to make dynamite, occupied Point Pinole from 1892-1960. After Bethlehem Steel aborted a plan to build a manufacturing plant there, GGBA contributed \$100,000 in 1973 to help the Park District purchase Point Pinole, which harbors rarely seen Black Rails.

At the southern end of Point Pinole, the Dotson Family Marsh honors the legacy of environmentalist Whitney Dotson, who served on the boards of both the Park District and GGBA, and whose father spearheaded the first of several fights to save the site from development. Acquired for the regional shoreline in 2011 and then restored, the 100-acre marsh once hosted GGBA's winter docent program, engaging the local community in bayside birding.

LET'S BOND OVER BIRDS: A LOOK AT PROP 4

BY RYAN NAKANO

On the eastern end of Alameda, past a maze of vacant military housing units, a tiny off-white puff of feathers peeks from below a sleek Nike swoosh-of-a-bird. Beside the new family sits a beautiful speckled shell.

Every year, the newest members of the Least Tern Colony nesting in Alameda Point, emerge onto the sands of an old airfield and into the world. Each new chick sparks hope in the hearts of those who have advocated on the endangered bird's behalf.

But the world is changing, the planet is warming, and rising tides threaten nesting sites around the Bay.

According to National Audubon's Survival By Degrees climate tool, an increase of 1.5 degrees celsius could cause the Least Tern population to lose at least half its local habitat in the Bay, that is, unless something is done.

In early July, the California legislature approved a \$10 billion Climate Bond, which will show up on November ballots as "Prop 4", the Parks, Environment, Energy, and Water Bond Measure.

For this \$10 billion to become a reality, Prop 4 must be approved by a simple majority (51%) of California voters. Once approved, the state will issue this general obligation bond to fund climate resiliency projects.

This historic bond measure represents an investment for people, birds, other wildlife and the land itself.

The bond earmarks \$1.2 billion towards increasing coastal resiliency and protecting coastal lands from sea level rise, \$85 million of which is specifically reserved for habitat restoration and conservation projects in the San Francisco Bay Area.

According to the State Coastal Conservancy, Pier 94, Heron's Head Park, Pt. Isabel, and De-Pave Park are all habitat sites in the SF Bay Area in need of significant funding.

De-Pave Park sits adjacent to where the Least Tern colony currently nests on the grounds of the former Naval Air Station in Alameda. Upon its completion, the park will create new habitat for these birds and increase their chances of surviving in the Bay.

If Prop 4 passes in November, projects like De-Pave park will



Learn Tern.

Rick Lewis

have a higher likelihood of coming to fruition.

Of course, these kinds of projects are not only beneficial to birds and other wildlife, but they actively support human resilience to climate change, with 40% of bond funds reserved for climate-vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

The proposition comes at a critical time. Back in early May, Governor Gavin Newsom announced \$9 billion in cuts to climate-related programs, \$400 million of which was slated for the State Coastal Conservancy, a key funding partner for Golden Gate Bird Alliance.

For the Bay Area and the rest of California, Prop 4 is an egg, a beautiful speckled shell holding our home and the future in its protective care. Learn how you can help make Prop 4 a reality at yesonprop4ca.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Birding For Everyone Fellowship

If you're a birder living in the Bay Area and you identify as a member of an under-represented community, consider applying for the Birding for Everyone Fellowship by Friday, October 18. This program provides free access to our classes, a GGBA membership, and the support of a 10-person cohort.

Save the Dates - Christmas Bird Count

Every year, Golden Gate Bird Alliance proudly hosts three opportunities for you to contribute to one of the nation's longest running citizen science projects, The Christmas Bird Count. Come out with us in Oakland December 15, Richmond December 29, and San Francisco December 27 to count birds!

Lights Out for Fall Migration

From now until November 13, during Fall bird migration, we invite you to turn off your lights from 11pm to 6am at home and at your workplace to keep birds safe at night. Follow us on social media for more tips on what you can do to go #LightsOut for birds.



From left: Ruby-crowned Kinglet courtesy Melani King; Booker T. Anderson Jr. Park courtesy Richmond Initiative Committee.

BOOKER T. ANDERSON JR. PARK: BAY AREA HOTSPOT

BY DEREK HEINS

LOCATION

Carlson Blvd,
Richmond, CA
94804

Local birders are especially drawn to this park because of the potential to spot a rarity during fall migration

A short distance from the heavily birded shorelines nearby, Booker T. Anderson Jr. Park's 22 acres in the City of Richmond has become a gem for local birders. The park was named in honor of the reverend of Easter Hill United Methodist Church, a leader of the civil rights movement who hosted Martin Luther King Jr. at his home on the corner of Bay view and South 55th Street.

Baxter Creek, flowing from its source in the Berkeley Hills, bisects the park and is the key to making this park a draw for birds. If you're flying out of Oakland International Airport, look down and you'll see this island of green against an otherwise urban landscape. A short walk from the parking lot you'll find a bridge crossing the creek. You can bird the creek from either side, with the best area typically on the southside, near the baseball field. Look for Lesser and American Goldfinches, Cedar Waxwings, Downy Woodpeckers, Orange-crowned Warblers, American Robins, Black Phoebes, Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Oak Titmice and California Towhees. The transformation of this stretch of Baxter Creek to enhance its habitat created quite a controversial situation early this century, including what became known as the "Chainsaw Massacre".

Local birders are especially drawn to this park

because of the potential to spot a rarity during fall migration. On a magical day in October 2022, the first Baltimore Oriole seen in the East Bay since 1954 was spotted in the park. Later that day a Great-crested Flycatcher was spotted, the first ever recorded in the East Bay. Those two stole the show from a Rose-breasted Grosbeak that had been hanging around for almost a month, often visiting the Chinese Pistache tree in the parking lot. Other rarities seen in recent years include Chestnut-sided Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler and American Redstart. More likely to be seen during fall migration are Western Tanagers, Yellow Warblers, Warbling Vireos, and an occasional Willow Flycatcher.

For those who avoid regional parks with challenging terrain and rocky paths, this park offers a paved path that parallels Baxter Creek and then circles the east side of the park. Say hi to some of the local residents who make this loop their daily routine and keep your eyes out for Bay Area resident species and vagrants alike.

GGBA's Richmond Initiative Committee kicked off its efforts in 2021 by creating the Richmond Christmas Bird Count. The committee has identified Booker T. Anderson Jr. Park as an ideal location for outreach and has sponsored events there to share our love of birding.

Have a favorite birding site you'd like to share? Contact rnakano@goldengatebirds.org.

DONATIONS

Thank you for being a part of our donor and member community. We are deeply appreciative of every individual, business and organization that supports Golden Gate Bird Alliance. In this issue we recognize our new members from September 2023–August 2024 and all of our major donors from the past year.

Major Donors

\$10,000+

Jennifer Braun & Raymond J. Ryan; The Estate of Susan Diridoni & Satoru Fujii; Randall & Katherine Erickson; Kenneth Hillan & Duncan Robertson; The Estate of Meri Jaye

\$5,000-\$9,999

Linda Agerter & Richard Judd; Mary Betlach; Pat Kirkpatrick & Sid Wolinsky; Vivian Kremer; Karen Rosenbaum & Ben McClinton

\$2,500-\$4,999

Chris & Gary Bard; Penny D Barron; Maynard P. & Katherine Z. Beuhler Foundation Fund; John Callaway & Trisha Cruse; Susan Mary Consey; Patricia Greene; Susan MacWhorter; Miles & Mel McKey; John & Hortensia Nelson; Helen McKenna & Allan Ridley; Eric Schroeder & Susan Palo; Jacqueline Smalley; Edward & Ellen Vine; Fritz Wolff; Geraldine Young

\$1,000-\$2,499

Jan Ambrosini & Tim Stroshane; Regina & Ralph Anavy; Carol Baird & Alan Harper; Cathy Bleier & Peter Meyer; The Bluebird Fund; Douglas Booth; Donna Borden; Andrea Burhoe; Srikant Char; Minder Cheng; George J. & Theresa L. Cotsirilos Merced Foundation; Phil & Bo Cotty; Laura Cremin & Mark Gallivan; Julia Davidson; Lynne M Eggers; Linda Fraley; Jane Freeman; Ryan Gee; Angie Geiger; Clara Gerdes & Ken Greenberg; Bob Hallet; The Harnly/Roeper Fund; Derek & Cristina Heins; Peter Hsia; Deborah Hurst Senter; Anne Jennings & Andy Stacklin; Alan Kaplan; Sally & Phillip Kipper; Liz & Larry Kuo; Marie & Barry Lipman; Bruce Mast & Juliet Cox; Mara & Don Melandry; David Monedero; Denny & Merrily Parker; Regina Phelps; Mary Porter; Megan & Richard Prelinger; Leslie Rose & Alan Ramo; Carol Ross; Elizabeth Sojourner; Chris Tarr & Kevin Donahue; Linda Thurston; Stephen Van Gordon; Kenneth Weidner; Mary Wheeler; Stephen & Karen Wiel; Viviana Wolinsky & Steven Hunter; Sam Zuckerman

Memorial Contribution

Kathleen Bramall in memory of Bella; James Cunradi in memory of Ida Cunradi; Theresa Brennan in memory of Sr. Danielle; Kevan V Vander Wahl in memory of Elsie Dyke; Tara McIntire in memory of Christopher Feeney; June Kodani in memory of Pauline Fong; Sharon Gillars in memory of Alex Gillars; Susan Rideout in memory of Joni Hollis; Eileen Richey in memory of Claire Hunter; Albert Tadakuma in memory of Michael Ingrebetsen; Jaime Michaels in memory of Eric J. Larson; Andrew McKey in memory of Miles T. McKey; H. Leabah Winter in memory of Katrina Rau; Verena Schelling in memory of Angelica Schelling; Sylvia Hawley in memory of Roy Scott; Sarah & Cesar Cardona, Mary Chapman, Susan Crawley, Jeffrey Goddard, Ann Gordon, James M Lee, Yvette Macdonald, Loraine Simmons, Catherine Teare, Donald Thomas in memory of Michael Stevens; Sandy Gess in memory of Dianne Winne

In Honor of Contribution

Ronald Rosenberg in honor of Kirsten Asmussen; Tracy Vega in honor of Lisa Bach; Susan Elwell and Hanno Lewis in honor of Carol Baxter; Lauren Le Vine in honor of Steven Beckwith & Susan McCormick; Brien Kirk in honor of Gabi, Joey, & Micah Bennett-Kirk; Elizabeth Becker in honor of Vinnie Byrne; Janet Carpinelli in honor of Shirley & Carl Carpinelli; Barbara G. Davis in honor of Konami Chisolm; LK Richardson in honor of Ilana DeBare; Andrew Slade in honor of Katie Duerr & Dominic Perrett; Reyla Graber in honor of Leora Feeney; Michiko Watanabe in honor of Seiko Grant; Tomi Kelley in honor of Karen Hall; Nina Harris in honor of Dan Harris & Lois Hirsch; Anne-Marie Lamarche in honor of Cristina Heins; Tim Kingston in honor of Kate Hoffman & Blake Edgar; Alicia Bell in honor of Martha Jackson; Heidi Luckenbach in honor of Jenn & David; Christine Hayamizu in honor of Alan Kaplan; Geraldine Young in honor of Susan MacWhorter; Benjamin

Thorne in honor of Aneesh Naik & Amy Rankine; Alberta Chew in honor of Miki Nakanishi; Kathryn Heintz in honor of Glenn Phillips; David and Linda Fournier in honor of Paul Schorr; Jacob Richards in honor of Jeremy Sher & Soorim Song; Lorri Holzberg in honor of Robin Stavisky; Pamela Williams in honor of Carol Baird; Carol Baird in honor of Pamela Williams; Gail MacDonald in honor of WWOC & The Ospreys

Corporate Contributions

Longroad Energy; Conservation Society of California DBA The Oakland Zoo; Piedmont Garden Club; Safari West, Inc.

Corporate Sponsorships

Birding Ecotours, LLC; Languar EcoTravels; Martin Marietta

Grants

California Coastal Commission; City of Berkeley; Contra Costa County Fish and Wildlife Committee; Flora Foundation; Justice Outside; Kitchell Foundation; Mary A Crocker Trust; Saving Birds Thru Habitat; SPRAWLDEF; University of California, San Francisco; Walter and Elise Haas Fund

New Members

Laika Abdulali; Linda Adler; Ann Alderman; Fabricio Alfaro; Diane Appel; Linda Appu; Ann Ardillo; Marcus Arnold & Christina Rhee; David Aue; Elaine Baden; Robert Braizer; Kate Beale; Laurie Bechtler; Victoria S Behrman; Leora Benioff; Lynn Dee Berger; Simon Betsalel; Vinona Bhatia; Gina Biernacki; Mikko Bojarsky; Clark Bouwman; Hester Bradbury; Janice Bradley; Isabelle Bramble; Claire Brees; Zelda Bronstein; Moretta Browne; Lynne Bruehlman; Lydia Bruno; Tianna Bruno; Brad Buckman; Amanda Bullington; Brad Burch; Britt B Callaway; Angela Calvillo; Charlotte Cashin; Karen G Castle; Krissa Cavouras; Yazmin Chamu; Vrishank Chandrashekar; Helen Chen Maggie Chen; Nancy Chiesa; Cyndi Chung; Kristina Clair; Hilary Clark; James Clark; Shaun Clark; Leigh; Hazel;

& Xelda Cline; Sarah Cline; Sarah Cohen; Susan Cohn; Andra Cojocar; Mari Collings; Chelsea Connor; Laura Cornett; Megan Cowdell; Heidi Craig; Anja C Crickmore; Sabine Dabady; Arko Dasgupta; Susannah Delano; Penelope Deleray; Jessica Dell; Betty DeLuco & Bob McNamara; Ann Dennis; Anne Derbes; Zerena Diaz; Lavinia Dimond; Mag; Elizabeth Doherty; Shawn Dohring; Elizabeth Donaldson; Theresa Downing; Zachary Drummond; Maria Ducey; Tori Dugan; John Christian Dupin; Henry Eakland; Christina Echavarren; Nancy Erb & Dick Kolbert; Jessie Farinholt; Dana Farkas; Morgan Faulkner; Mary Fecher; Barbara Ferry; Bobbi & Barbara Feyerabend; Leah Fisher; Sharyn Floyd; Jacques Fortier; Melinda Fowler; Olena Galligan; Dena Gardi; Marta Gardner; Mei-Hua Gee; Mark Gelade; Judy Gelb; Terrence Gentle; Jeanne George; Adam Gerhart; Tiare Giardina; Beth Gleghorn; Elke Glendenning; Jill Goodfriend; Carol Gu; Sarah Guerrero; Sandra Gumpert; Annika Halverson; Tiffany Han; Nancy Hand; Kellie Hanna; Tora Hanssen; Hilary Hardcastle; Sheila Harmon; Emily Harrington; Clive Harrison; James Harrison; Elizabeth & Joseph Hartog; Erika Helene; Miguel Hernandez; Beth Herr; Terry Hicks; Ortho Himchey; Harold Hingle; Helen Hobart; Lizzie Hoerauf; Vivian Hsu; Francine Huang; Sheila Islam; Cheryl Jacobs; Erik Jansen; Donald Johns; Harry Jones; Jacqueline Jones; Brian Kahn; Anjali Kamat; Frances A Kandl; Jay Karajgikar; Rachel Kassem; Michael Howard Katz; Melisa Kaye; Steve Kaye; Mary Kelly; Kathleen Kettel; David Keys; Bernadette Kim; Dorothy Kimmel; Maxine Kincora; Anna Klawter; Laura Klein; Gudrun Kleist; Jill Koenigsdorf; Josh & Guthrie Kornbluth; Janet Kraus; Darlene Kroidart; Neha Kumar & Vinish Janardhanan; Lynn Lakso; Calvin Lam; Anne-Marie Lamarche; Audrey Larkin; Kel Larkin; Gerard Launay; Shawn Laureyns; Jeanne Lavin; Katherine Law; Noreen Leahey; Joanne LeDuc; Valentino Leidi; Patricia Leslie; Alison

Limoges; Kevin Lin; Alyssa Lindsey; Marta Lindsey; Aleks Liou; Patricia Lis; Walter Liu; Ina Lockwood; Patricia Lowder; Dino Lucas; Heidi Luckenbach; Lorena Lupercio-Diaz; Mary Mackay; Katherine Madrigal; Rehana Mahfuz; Rhona Mahony; Gritidach Matee Manakitivipart; Doug Maner; Antonio Mantilla; Allison Marin; Kelly Markello; Audrey Martin; Chase Martin; Bonnie Marzlak; Claire Max; Krish Maypole; Mark & Jane McCall; Mary McCanta & Holly Huston; David McConnell; Peter McGuire; Akinwunmi McKinzie; Xenia Mejia; Thomas Merritt; Jennifer Miko; Danessa Miller; Khilesh Mistry; Alan Miyakawa; Subha Mohan; Dani Montijo; Leslie Moorjani; Kate Mountain; Curtis Munson; Wess-John Murdough; Kryst Muroya; Marguerite Murphy; Linda Murray; Erin Mussoni; Athena Nair Weber; Julian Nesbitt; Katherine Nielsen; T Noonan; Ana Maria Olivar; Masako Omata; Makiko Omori; Alfonso Orozco; Patrick Owens; Joan Padley; Maggie Pagan; Angela Pai; Miriam Palma-Trujillo; Michael Pastor; Donna Placzek; Lore Politzer; Renee Polizotto; Elaine Ponce; Mary Porter; Arlen Price; John Price &Shauna Sapper; Charlie Prins; Catherine Pyun; Kiki Quach; Matthew Raifman; Lauren Rangel; Owen Ratchye; Rohit Reddy; Amy Reid; Jean Richter; Lauren Robertori; Tomas Rodriguez; Ben Ron; Steve

Rottmayer; Sheila Ruhland; Kathryn Ruiz; Karen Rush; Linda Rutherford; Briana Sapp; Shauna Sapper; Jill Savini; Diane Scarlet; Naomi Schapiro; Morgan Schlesinger; Emmanuel Schnetzler; Yvonne Schwartz; Donna Scism; Megan Scott; Eva Seay; Chris Selby; Ioana Seritan; Malathy Sethuraman; Lisa Setlak; Amanda Seyfer; Aditi Sheth; Margaret Shooshani; Mary Shulenberg; Gabe Sibley; Zaira Sierra; Sylvie Silverstein; Wendy Siu; Nicole Smith; Emily Song; Judith Souza; Cary Sparks; Janet Stafford; Jeff Stanley; Mad &Wade Stano; Eleanor Stark &Gary Thompson; Lee Steadman; James Steuckert; Kathryn Stone; Lisa Summers; Amber Sumrall; Mary Swanson; James Symons &Dianna Jacobs; Chantel Taite; Natalie Tan-Torres; Nova Tanaya Ray; Lynn Thiebaud; The Thompson-Shiffar Family; Gail Todd; Jamie Trahan; Edgardo Traverso; Lorraine Trombino; John Tsortos; Linda Twilling; Joanna Van Dyk; James Veizades; Veera Venkataramani; Timara Vereen; Miriam Wahid; Samantha Walls; Ecco Wang; Lisa Warns; Natalie Waugh; Stan Weinstein; Melanie K Wentz; Keith White; Valerie Wilgus; Kenneth Wilkes; Louis Willacy; Shelly Willard; Nikki Woelk; turtle woman; Coretta Wright; Debbie Wu; Weilin Yan; David Yeung; Jackie Young; Linda Young; Tenise Young; Lois Zell; Ponmwa Zingfa

Remember the Birds

Including Golden Gate Bird Alliance in your estate plan is a generous way to ensure that the Bay Area remains a haven for the birds you love.

A bequest can be expressed in a will as simply as, “I bequeath [a sum of money, a percentage of my estate, or an IRA, life insurance policy or investment/bank account] to Golden Gate Bird Alliance, 2150 Allston Way, Suite 210, Berkeley, CA 94704.”

Consult with your attorney to discuss your particular situation. Learn more on our website at goldengatebirdalliance.org/plannedgiving.

Please know that we work hard to ensure the accuracy of this list. If your name has been omitted or misspelled, let us know at 510.843.2222.

LEAVE A LEGACY FOR BIRDS

When Scrub Jays are made aware of future food scarcity, they will plan ahead, storing excess food in locations with limited resources. When ravens are given a choice between an immediate food reward or a tool to unlock a much larger reward in the future, they tend to delay gratification, and in this way, also plan ahead.

Outside the corvid family, birds “plan” for the future by selecting ideal breeding territories with potential nest sites, reliable food sources and protection against predators. This of course, not only benefits the birds presently planning, but also their offspring.

These impressive feats are an incredible reminder of how we care for the things we value, and how, in the process of planning, we make decisions based on what we feel will make the most positive and lasting impact.

For each one of us, identifying what we value, how we live our values, and what kind of legacy we will leave behind to safeguard and immortalize both is critical.

If you’ve made it this far, chances are, you value birds and their future in the Bay Area and beyond.

Whether you’re a self-identified birder, fellow conservationist, nature lover, or simply enjoy seeing and hearing birds in your own neighborhood, you care enough to remain curious.

Which brings us back to those Scrub Jays and Corvids.

What would it look like to plan, not only for your future, but the legacy you’ll leave behind to ensure theirs?

This is Planned Giving.

Like the Scrub Jay and the Raven, you get



Scrub Jay.

to decide when, where, and how to use your resources in order to make the biggest future impact possible.

Many people who share our unwavering commitment to wildlife protection have named Golden Gate Bird Alliance as a beneficiary when planning their estate.

Over the past 90 years, legacy gifts have helped us protect the endangered California Least Tern at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge, save Golden Eagles and other raptors at the Altamont Pass Wind Resource Area, and engage in habitat restoration projects such as Martin Luther King, Jr. Shoreline Park in Oakland where hundreds of children learn about their local watershed each year in our youth education program.

If you’d like to talk with our staff about planned giving options, please contact GGBA Executive Director Glenn Phillips at 510.221.4102 or email gphillips@goldengatebirds.org. We welcome your support of our work to secure a legacy of conservation for Bay Area birds and wildlife.

Learn more at goldengatebirdalliance.org/plannedgiving.

SPEAKER SERIES

Due to last-minute cancellations and schedule changes, our Fall 2024 Speaker Series speaker list was not finalized as of press time. Please save the dates, and visit us online for updates at goldengatebirdalliance.org/education/speaker-series.

Thursday, October 17th 7-9pm

Thursday, November 21st 7-9pm



Noreen Weeden

MASTHEAD

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Christina Tarr

Vice President

Tara McIntire

Secretary

Chris Okon

Treasurer

Derek Heins

Jess Beebe, John Callaway, Blake Edgar, Angie Geiger, Kenneth Hillan, Rachel Lawrence, Susan MacWhorter, Sharol Nelson-Embry, Laurie Sample, Steve Powell, Mary Wand

STAFF

Executive Director

Glenn Phillips, 510.221.4102
gphillips@goldengatebirds.org

Deputy Director

Whitney Grover, 510.319.7137
wgrover@goldengatebirds.org

Volunteer and Conservation Advocacy Manager

Janet Carpinelli, 510.319.7135
jcarpinelli@goldengatebirds.org

Communications Director

Ryan Nakano, 510.227.6190
rnakano@goldengatebirds.org

Youth Education and Outreach Manager

Clay Anderson, 510.319.7138
canderson@goldengatebirds.org

Membership Manager

George Marschall, 510.319.7136
gmarschall@goldengatebirds.org

VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

Adult Education Chair

Maureen Lahiff, mlahiff@goldengatebirds.org

Field Trip Coordinator

Christina Tarr, fieldtrips@goldengatebirds.org

Travel with GGBA Coordinators

Dawn Lemoine and Eric Schroeder
travelprogram@goldengatebirds.org

MISSION STATEMENT

Golden Gate Bird Alliance’s mission is to inspire people to protect Bay Area birds and our shared natural environment.

ABOUT GOLDEN GATE BIRD ALLIANCE

The Golden Gate Bird Alliance was founded January 25, 1917.

The Gull is published four times per year. Special third-class postage paid in Oakland, CA. Send address changes to the office promptly. The post office does not forward *The Gull*.

Golden Gate Bird Alliance

2150 Allston Way, Suite 210
Berkeley, CA 94704
Office hours: Monday through Thursday,
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Telephone: 510.843.2222
goldengatebirdalliance.org

This issue of *The Gull* was published October 2024.

Get Out the Vote for Birds!

As the November elections approach, we urge you to make your voice heard by voting. This year Proposition 4, the Climate Bond, is on the ballot, as well as the East Bay Regional Park District elections. We encourage you to research the candidates' positions on environmental issues and vote for those who align with your values.

BACKYARD BIRDER



Tara McIntire

Fox Sparrow.

FOX SPARROW

BY ERIC SCHROEDER

I remember the first time I saw a Fox Sparrow: a chocolate brown bird hopping and scratching vigorously in leaf litter under redwoods in San Francisco. “Gee,” I thought. “That sure is behaving like a Hermit Thrush.” But the color and pattern weren’t quite right, and the bird was too small. “Sort of like a Song Sparrow,” I mused, but that wasn’t right either. Sensing my confusion, a birder behind me whispered “Fox Sparrow,” a new bird for me, and now a local favorite.

The Fox Sparrow is one of the most variable species in North America, with 18 subspecies divided into four distinct groups based

on appearance: Red, Slate-colored, Large-billed, and Sooty. The most common variety in the Bay Area is the Sooty Fox Sparrow, distinguished by its dark brown (sooty!) plumage and relatively short tail. The easiest way to identify them is by their behavior—that hopping and scratching in the leaf litter under mature trees. Birds of the World describes this foraging technique as a “double scratch,” meaning that both feet move synchronously like a mechanical wind-up bird.

Just as there’s considerable variation in appearance, there are differences in migratory patterns, even within a group. Some subspecies of Sooty Fox Sparrows are altitudinal migrants, meaning they travel relatively short distances from coastal areas to higher elevations in the Sierra, while others undertake one of the longest known journeys over water by a land bird, from Southern California to the Aleutians.

Our local Sooty Fox Sparrows spend the winter here and leave each spring to breed along the coast of southern Alaska. We also get a few of the large-billed subspecies breeding here. (If you see one of these, you’ll know it. Not only is it longer-tailed and reddish in color, but its scientific name, *megarrhyncha*, means “big nose,” an apt description.)

Climate change may reduce the winter range for Fox Sparrows in the southeastern United States and in California’s Central Valley, but the Bay Area and Northern California Coast would still remain habitable for them. According to National Audubon, however, the picture is grim during summer months—a three-degree temperature rise would eliminate 72 percent of their current breeding grounds, meaning fewer Fox Sparrows with their distinctive “happy feet.”